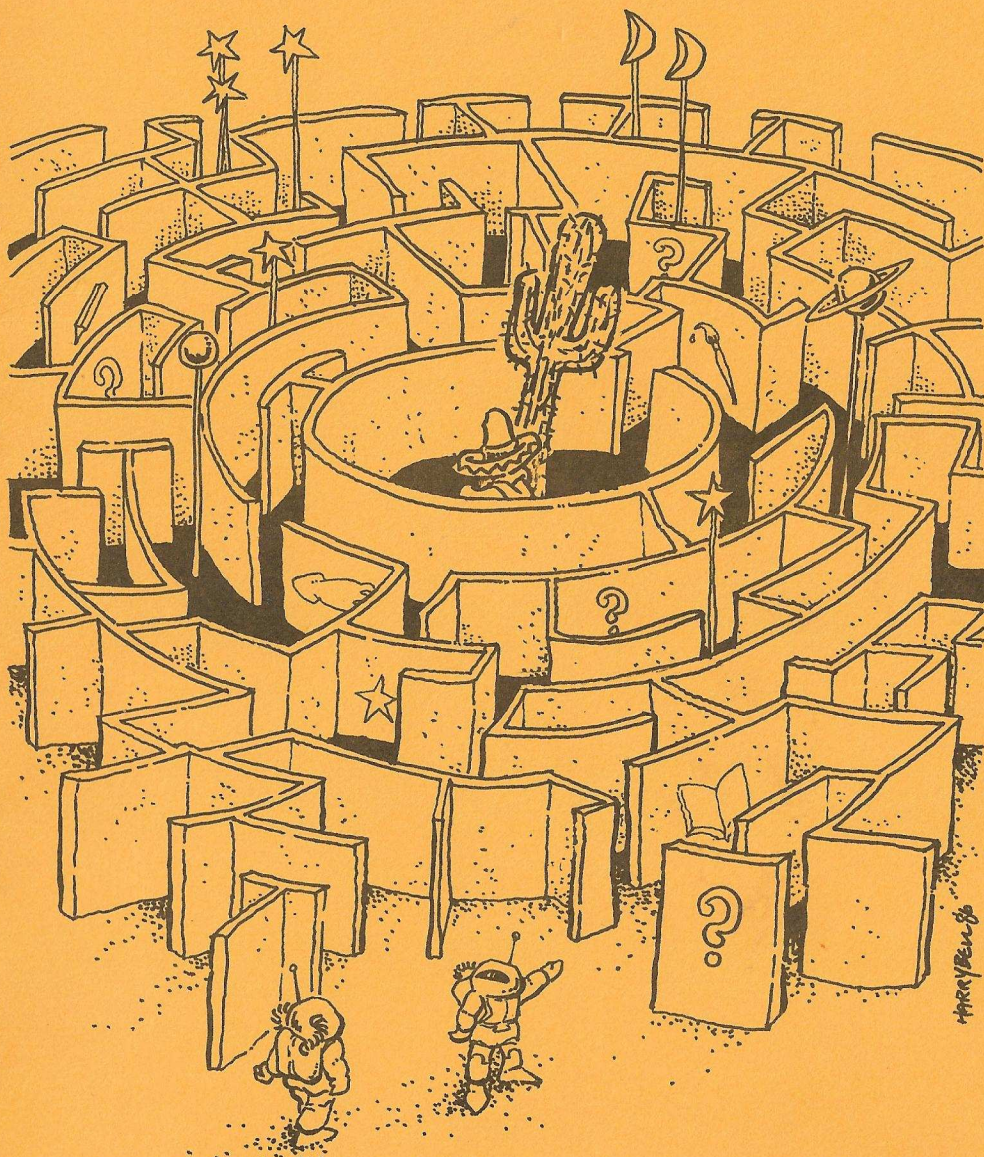


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Welcome to Mexican 2!

Welcome to Mexican 2, the convention that carries forward the philosophy of catering to the literary forms of science fiction, fanzine fandom, and Desperate Fun. If you're a veteran of the first Mexican then we're glad you enjoyed it enough to support us again; if this is your first time around — hang onto your sombrero, you might have a tough weekend ahead.

Too often these days I've read convention reports where people say they had a good time socialising and meeting friends over the weekend even though the convention itself was an organisational shambles or simply a bore. What a pity. Although I'm glad a lot of convention attendees are sufficiently resourceful to pull a good time together out of any gathering it disturbs me that they seem sometimes to accept an investment of money and time in travel, rooms, food and drink — and registration — simply in order to have a good time despite the convention, when the convention and all that happens during it (including the programme) should be central to the experience. We've worked at making Mexican 2 something we believe will occupy that place in your attention. We want to reverse the trend of people being rather selfsatisfied about not bothering to attend the programme because they were in the bar socialising. We want them, even if they still prefer to stay in the bar, to feel as though the programme really was worthwhile and they missed out on something occasionally. I think we've got people and material that will lure even the most firmly embedded bar-prop out occasionally.

We may — you can never tell until afterwards — also have succeeded in arranging a format which helps break down the barriers between those on stage and those on the audience, so that we'll get as much participation in the programme items from those off-stage as on. Keep that in mind; we expect you to be a part of the convention, not just a passive observer in the audience. Your thoughts, opinions and ideas are welcome anytime, anyplace, whether on stage or off, hanging on to the bar or contemplating the Zen Sandpit in the Fanroom. This is one convention we hope you'll remember attending in the fullest sense.

Mexicon's interest in science fiction is paralleled with its involvement with fandom, primarily fanzine fandom. Accordingly we have a Fanroom full of fanzines for trade, giveaway or sale, a production workshop for those who need a little brushing up on their duplication techniques, and several programme items, both "planned" in the main room and "impromptu" in the Fanroom where much will be uncovered, even possibly revealed...

Another feature of the Mexican philosophy is the apparent lack of Guests of Honour. Because we prefer to emphasise ideas more than personalities we invite along a variety of speakers and panellists, trying to range as far from the traditional sf ranks from which Guests of Honour are usually chosen as possible. Mexican 1 had a programme philosophy following the theme "Pushing sf to its limits", grappling with the idea that much of the best science fiction today is in fact being written outside the increasingly narrow publishing definition of the genre. This time around we've taken the basic theme of "Creativity", specifically, why individuals have chosen to work in any specific format or genre. It might indeed seem a far run from the media-attended works of Iain Banks to the comparatively obscure strivings of Alan Moore, or the efforts of any one of a dozen excellent fanzine-only writers many of you will unfortunately never have heard of, but we hope to gain some inkling of what it is makes them do things the way they do.

So, here's the second Mexican, let us all make of it as much as we can.

You may have noticed the cuttlefish.

— Linda K. Pickersgill

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M. John Harrison	<i>In Viriconium</i> <i>Viriconium Nights</i>
Gwyneth Jones	<i>Divine Endurance</i>
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The History of Mexican

Most people by now know the story of how Mexican got its name, and developed its basic philosophy. For those of you still at some disadvantage and wondering why a British science fiction convention should name itself after a distant foreign country that has never even been part of the Empire, read on...

(The following was first published in the Programme Book of Tynecon II: The Mexican. For Geordie-land you should now read Brum, and for Newcastle Brown you should read... er... Tetley's Bitter? — Ed.)

So why is a convention situated smack dab in the middle of Geordie-land called Mexican? Is it really because Newcastle is twin-city to Tiajuana? Or because folks in the Highlands like to sing "South of the Border down Newcastle Way"? Or because enchiladas go well with Newcastle Brown? The real answer lies in a situation that arose at Channellcon in Brighton during Easter of '82. Maybe you remember it as I do, especially those lull periods when the bars were shut and there seemed nothing better to do than sit around and mutter half-hearted complaints. The particular afternoon a committed group of us were seated near the bar in case by some freak circumstance it should open early, muttering away and airing our favourite gripes while watching as barbarian hordes and Logan's Runners ambled by. The muttering had to do with the changing nature of Eastercons (cross reference "Rob Hansen's Guide to Fannish Complaints" number 37). This rapidly aging gripe was about how the mass popularity of Science Fiction had broadened the definition of what was once primarily a written medium to include films, television, comics, computers, costumes, war games, and Star Trek porno. The conclusion was that written sf, both as literature and as a basis for fanzine culture, is now a fringe itself in the wider field of what is now known as "Sci-Fi". It's a sad day to discover your star is no longer the only one shining in the universe, so we griped and waited for the bar to open.

"What we really need," someone began, "is a special special interest group. Something truly fringe that we can claim to belong to and demand that the next Eastercon cater for us." "Yeah, but like what?" "Like Mexican fandom," Abi Frost threw at us. We all turned to stare at her. "You mean there is such a thing?", Gregory asked. "Oh, surely there must be somewhere... Mexican fans running around doing Mexicanly fannish type things. I don't see why Mexican fans should be neglected just because they're a small special interest group."

Things blossomed from there. We would become Mexican fandom and demand bilingual programme books and programmes catering to Mexican fans. We'd want siestas scheduled for the afternoons as well as tequila on demand and tacos served at the banquet. Our plans grew wild. Chris Evans suggested we all wear sombreros with "Kees Me Queek" badges on them as inspired by the "souvenir of Brighton" hats he'd seen earlier that day. Greg suggested that we all wear tight black trousers with silver-spangled stripes running down the seams, and Harry Bell suggested bandoleros. Without realising it we had slipped into using a Hollywood-style pseudo-Mexican accent and each new suggestion was greeted with many "arriba's and 'si si's". "And we'll request that we have our very own Mexican badges," someone threw in, to which the unanimous reply was "BADGES? We don't need no steenkin' badges!" (cross reference see: Treasure of the Sierra Madre). By this time the bar had opened at last and we all grabbed a drink to toast our identity as a fringe group: Mexican fandom... the kind who read sf and fanzines. Spontaneously we broke into Mexican-like song, "aye yi yi yi...". It was the only Mexican song we knew and even then we didn't know the rest of it so we just kept singing the same phrase over and over again: "aye yi yi yi... aye yi yi yi...". Mexican fandom was born.

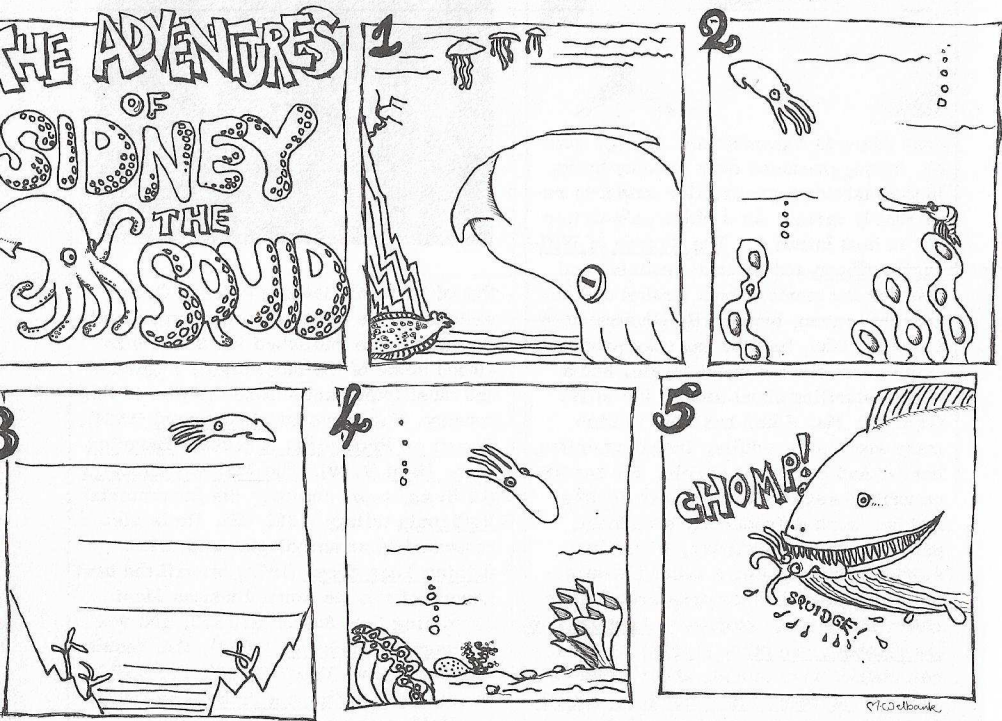
To close, I would like to reiterate the basic principles of the Mexican idea:

The Mexican Charter

- 1) Mexico is a specialist convention dealing centrally with the written form of Science Fiction, and deliberately shuns fringe elements by not catering for them.
- 2) Any explorations around this theme, must derive from it and reflect it (e.g. at Mexicon 2 we are exploring the theme of creativity by inviting as speakers talented people who work in other media).
- 3) The planned events should be tailored to fit into a Linear Programme, which aims to involve as many of the attendees as possible.
- 4) It should, as far as possible, examine the active issues and controversies of the day as they relate to sf.
- 5) It should strive to keep registration and hotel costs as low as possible.
- 6) Where it does not contravene 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 above, Mexicon should endeavour to try not to take itself too seriously!
- 7) Charter? We don't wan' no steenkin' charter!

Bienvenido a Mejicon!

— el jefe



Mexicon 2's Featured Speakers

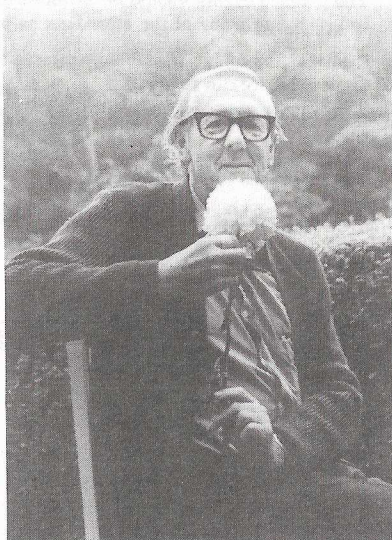
JOAN AIKEN



Joan Aiken is a popular and prolific author, having produced over seventy books in the last thirty years. Her output is remarkably varied. As a children's writer she is best known for The Wolves of Willoughby Chase and its four sequels, and also for the stories about Arabel and her anarchic raven, beautifully illustrated by Quentin Blake, but she has also produced many short stories about magic, and a rather startling ghost story. But apart from this Ms. Aiken has also written many stories for adults, including crime, horror and historical novels. She has also written several plays and tv scripts, and her work is frequently broadcast, particularly on Jackanory, where her stories are delighting a second generation. Her most recent works are another collection of short stories — Last slice of the rainbow, and other stories — and a new collection of stories about Arabel's Raven — Mortimer says nothing, and other stories — both published in 1985.

— MP

BRIAN ALDISS



Tara Heinemann

One of Britain's leading science fiction writers whose work since his first novel, Non-Stop, was published in 1958 has included some of the most highly regarded and most important science fiction in this country. These include Greybeard (1964), Report on Probability A (1968), Barefoot in the Head (1969), The Malacia Tapestry (1976) and most recently his monumental Helliconia trilogy (1982-85). He is also renowned as an anthologist and critic (Billion Year Spree (1973) is still the best history of sf). He won a Hugo as Most Promising New Author in 1959, and won the Hugo for Hothouse (1962), the Nebula for "The Saliva Tree" (1965), the BSFA Award for The Moment of Eclipse (1972) and Helliconia Spring (1982), among other awards.

— PK

Recommended works:

The Lost Steps Alejo Carpentier
(novel)

3-10 to Yuma (film)

Long Day's Journey Into Night

Eugene O'Neil (play)

Borodin's 2nd Symphony (music)

IAIN BANKS

Mark Gerson



A new young writer who made a tremendous impact on the British literary scene with his first novel, The Wasp Factory (1984) which was alternately hailed as a work of genius or as sick. The novel used tropes and conventions obviously culled from a familiarity with science fiction, and this became more obvious with his second novel, Walking on Glass (1985) which contained definite fantasy elements. His third novel has just been delivered to his publisher. — PK

Recommended books:

Catch-22 Joseph Heller

Tiger! Tiger! Alfred Bester

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

Hunter S. Thomson

CLIVE BARKER

Clive Barker was born in Liverpool and had success as a dramatist before achieving immediate acclaim for his collections of horror stories, the Books of Blood. The first three were published in 1984; three more and his first novel The Damnation Game followed in 1985. Barker wrote the screenplay for the movie Underworld, a horrifying experience in itself. He is also a formidable cartoonist and conversationalist. — CG

PAMELA BUCKMASTER

Pamela Buckmaster has been involved with sf ever since her teens, as one of only four women regularly attending fan meetings at the Globe ("my first universality") and later, one of the first sf reviewers, and wife of Ken Bulmer. Now, with Les Flood, she runs the Carnell Literary Agency, sf and fantasy specialists.

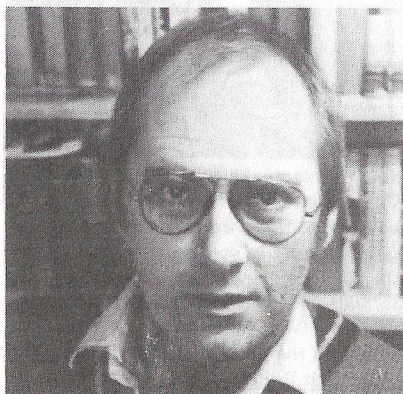
— CG

Inspirations:

Edith Piaf

Middlemarch George Eliot

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich Alexander Solzhenitsyn

JOHN CLUTE

John Clute gratefully left his native Cana-

da at the age of 14, and proceeded gradually via Chicago and New York to Camden, where he remains. He has published one novel, The Disinheriting Party, and much distinctive fiction and criticism in New Worlds. He was Peter Nicholls's associate editor on The Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction and is now reviews editor of Foundation, consultant editor to Interzone, and a reviewer for TLS and New Statesman. — CG

Inspirations:

Il Viaggio a Rheims

Gioacchino Rossini

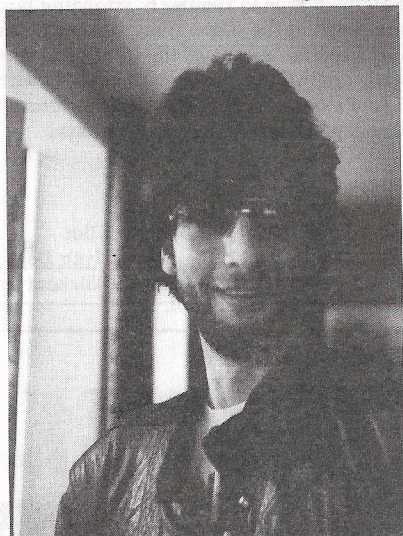
Little Big John Crowley

The Book of the New Sun

Gene Wolfe

NEIL GAIMAN

Lisa Tuttle



Neil Gaiman says of himself: "Suave, sophisticated and blase are just three of the words that this Portsmouth-born writer has difficulty in spelling. He is a mainstay of Knave and many other magazines on that shelf you can't reach in the newsagents'." With Kim Newman Gaiman compiled the book of sf quotations, Ghastly Beyond Belief, and is now working on Don't Panic: The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Companion and The Complete Gui-

de to Bloody Everything. — CG

Inspirations:

Grimly Feendish Leo Baxendale

Nine Hundred Grandmothers

R. A. Lafferty

Gallantry James Branch Cabell

STEVE GALLAGHER



In 1978 Piccadilly Radio in Manchester broadcast a six-part sf drama series called The Last Rose of Summer, which was later turned into a novel. Steve Gallagher followed this up with Hunter's Moon and The Babylon Run, as well as doing a number of plays for BBC Radio, and he has also written the Doctor Who episodes Warrior's Gate and Terminus. Novels include Chimera (1982) and Follower (1984), and he has had short fiction in F&SF and Asimov's. Current projects include a screenplay, a novel, another radio play, and a critical study of "Richard Bachman". — PK

Recommended works:

La Belle et la Bete

Jean Cocteau's film

"The Door in the Wall" and "The Magic Shop" by H. G. Wells

In The Midst of Life

Ambrose Bierce

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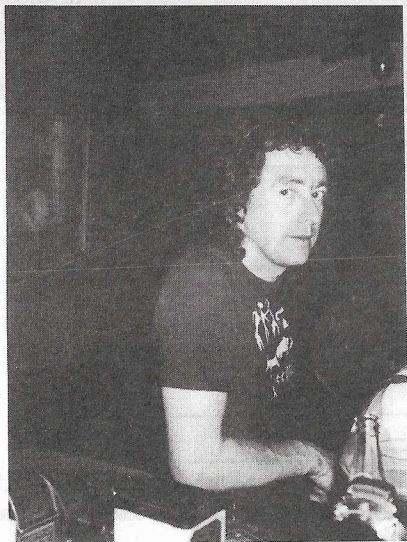
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DAVE GARNETT

Lisa Tuttle

David Garnett has had half a dozen sf books published — the last one, he suddenly realizes, a decade ago. Since then he has written several other books of various types, and under almost as many different names. He says he plans on doing more sf real soon now. His favourite beers are Youngs, Tanglefoot and Greenhalls. — DG

Recommended films:

Brazil

Walkabout

Young Lady Chatterley

WILLIAM GIBSON

William Gibson is an American writer living in Canada. His first novel Neuromancer achieved the unique distinction of winning the Philip K. Dick Award, the Hugo and the Nebula. A "sort of sequel", Count Zero, is published this month by Gollancz. Gibson's short stories appear frequently in Omni. As influences he cites William Burroughs, J.G. Ballard, fashion magazines, The Face. — CG



Alex Waterhouse-Hayward

COLIN GREENLAND

Colin Greenland is the author of a study of Michael Moorcock's New Worlds, The Entropy Exhibition; a fantasy novel, Daybreak on a Different Mountain; and Magnetic Storm, about the designs of Roger Dean. He co-edited Interzone: The First Anthology and writes regularly for Foundation, TLS, New Statesman, City Limits and White Dwarf. — CG

Inspirations:

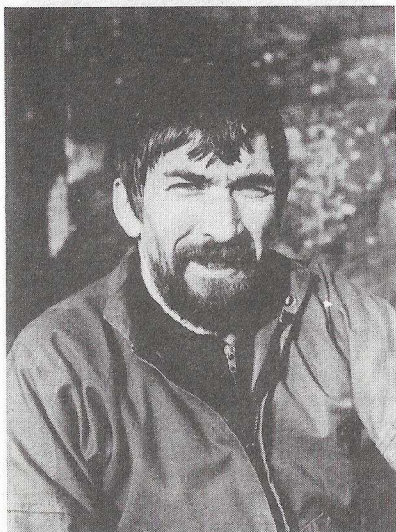
In Viriconium M. John Harrison

Celine et Julie Vont en Bateau

Jacques Rivette

Garlands The Cocteau Twins

M. JOHN HARRISON



M. John Harrison is the author of the Viriconium sequence: The Pastel City; A Storm of Wings; In Viriconium (runner-up for the Guardian prize for fiction); and Viriconium Nights. He was literary editor of New Worlds and now contributes acerbic and all too rare reviews to Foundation. Harrison is at work on Climbers, a novel based on his own rock-climbing experiences, and a new fantasy novel, provisionally titled The Course of the Heart.

— CG

Inspirations:

The Bible

The Sound of Music soundtrack album

The British Mountaineering Council Guide to Stanage Edge

K.W. JETER

K.W. Jeter is an American author who can't afford to live in America. He is now at the end of a year spent in Bath, writing three new novels. He was a friend of Philip K. Dick, whose enthusiasm for it promoted the eventual publication of Jeter's

controversial novel Dr. Adder, to be published here by Grafton Books, together with Glass Hammer. Everyone calls him K.W., except his mother. — CG

GWYNETH JONES

Divine Endurance was perhaps the most dramatic debut in recent years, a haunting and evocative novel that seemed to creep belatedly upon the critics who then suddenly burst into loud hosannas of acclaim. She spent some years in Singapore, which provides the unusual background for the novel. Yet Divine Endurance was not her first novel, she had already published six unusual novels for children, Water in the Air, Influence of Ironwood, The Exchange and Dear Hill, plus two books as Anne Halam, Ally Ally Aster and The Alder Tree, which it would be well worth while seeking out. Her new novel, which threatens to be every bit as challenging as Divine Endurance, is due out in 1986. — PK

Recommended books

A Grass Rope William Mayne

The Tale of Genji Murasaki

Murasaki Shikibu

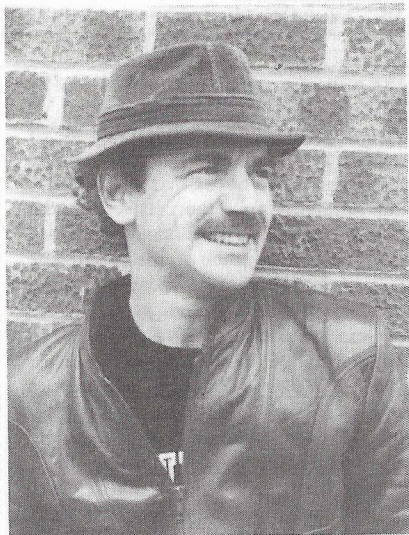
When it Changed Joanna Russ

JERRY KAUFMAN & SUZANNE TOMPKINS

Once part of New York fandom where they published The Spanish Inquisition, they joined the great fannish emigration to Seattle where their activities engendered several other people's fanzines, and also their own Mainstream. Jerry is the kind of guy who dyes his hair black so he can look more Jewish. Suzanne likes to be known as either "Suzle" or "Suzanne Tompkins" but not "Suzle Tompkins". Good lord. She's also allergic to both cats and tobacco smoke, which effectively cuts her socialising among British fan homes down to Phil Palmer's house. (What about the Langfords, or us? — Ed.)

— AC

GARRY KILWORTH

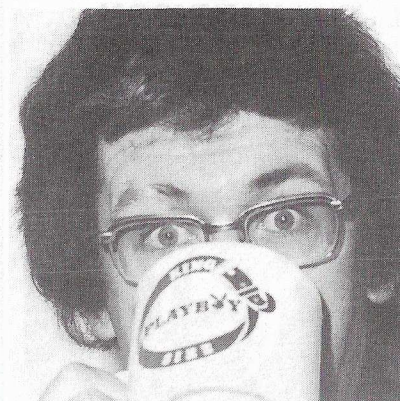


Garry Kilworth first came to attention in 1974 by winning the Gollancz/Sunday Times short story competition with "Let's Go To Golgotha". Since then he has published a string of novels: In Solitary, The Night of Kadar, Split Second, Gemini God and A Theatre of Timesmiths. He is a regular attendee at the Milford workshops, and a prolific writer of short stories, with one collection: The Songbirds of Pain. Forthcoming are a mainstream novel, Witchwater Country, from Bodley Head, and reputedly a collection of poems from a small press publisher.

— PK

Recommended books:

As I Lay Dying William Faulkner
Heart of Darkness Joseph Conrad
The Ballad of the Sad Cafe
 Carson McCullers



(1979 to date). A talent for finding black humour in a fear of destruction is shown in the speculative non-fiction War in 2080 (1979) and The Leaky Establishment (1984), a farce set in a nuclear research base (Dave worked in one before writing full-time). Over thirty short stories and various segments of non-fiction books were joined by The Space Eater (1982), an orthodox hard sf first novel. Forthcoming are an sf novel, Wilderness of Mirrors, and a spoof disaster novel with John Grant, Earthdoom. His fan writing is much acclaimed: in 1985 he won the Best Fan Writer Hugo at Aussiecon II, and he is the first European TAFF winner for 16 years to see his trip report, The Transatlantic Hearing Aid, through to fruition.

— RJ

Recommended works:

The Earthsea Trilogy

Ursula Le Guin

"Kai Lung" Ernest Bramah

The Man Who Was Thursday

G.K. Chesterton

Rogue Moon Algis Budrys

The Leaky Establishment

David Langford

DAVE LANGFORD

An Oxford University SF Group alumnus, Dave practiced his writing on the unsuspecting world of sf fandom with his fan-zines Twll-Ddu (1976-81) and Ansible

JAN MARK

Jan Mark was a teacher of English and Art before she became a freelance writer in 1974, though she had been writing for some time before that. She was runner-



up in a Daily Mirror short story competition when she was 15. Since then she has made something of a speciality of winning awards: the Penguin/Guardian Award for Children's Fiction 1975, the Rank/Observer Prize for Teenage Fiction 1982, the Library Association's Carnegie Medal in 1976 and 1983, the Angel Award for Fiction 1983, and British nominee for the International Hans Andersen Award in 1984. Her work includes novels and short stories for children and adults, TV and radio plays. Her books include the sf novels The Ennead (1978) and Divide and Rule (1979), both powerful satires, Nothing to be Afraid Of (1980), Feet (1983) and most recently At the Sign of the Dog and Rocket and Trouble Half-Way (both 1985). — PK

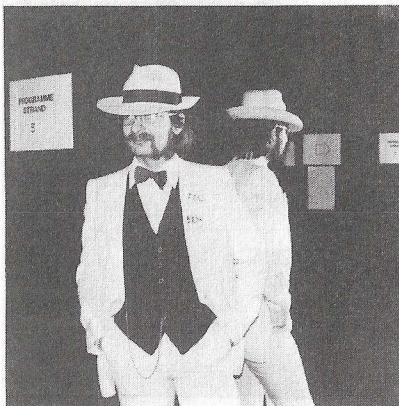
ALAN MOORE

Alan Moore is one of the finest fantasists writing today. He writes comic books which will turn some of you off, but it shouldn't. Comics have the same potential as book form sf, and though they reach it even less often there is a select group of writers who produce works of

real power and originality. Alan Moore is one. A superstar writer, unusual when most comics superstars are artists, he has regularly been voted Best Writer by both fans and pros. His work now appears regularly on both sides of the Atlantic. Acclaimed for strips such as V For Vendetta with its stark vision of the Fascist Britain of 1997 and Marvelman, which used sf themes and stunningly redefined the superhero, he was offered the chance to write Swamp Thing for DC Comics in the USA, and his work mainly appears here now. An atypical horror comic, Swamp Thing — how many other comics read mainly by pubescent American males touch on the dangers of nuclear waste, racism, incest and menstruation? Intrigued? Don't miss the interview.

— RH

KIM NEWMAN



He has been a cabaret kazoo player, playwright/lyricist (works include Another England, The Gold Diggers of 1981, My One Little Murder Won't Do Any Harm, The Roaring Eighties and Deep South), and film critic for CityLimits and The Monthly Film Bulletin. Author of Nightmare Movies, a critical history of horror film since 1968, science fiction in Interzone and horror stories in Fantasy Tales,

and compiler with Neil Gaiman of Ghastly Beyond Belief. He is also a director of The Peace And Love Corporation, "a loose collective of people who write funny articles for dirty magazines". He is currently at work on an sf/hard-boiled detective novel. — PK

Recommended works:

The films of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger

Psycho

Diary of a Nobody George and Weedon Grossmith

The novels of Cornell Woolrich
Slimier, Carnosaur and The Fungus Harry Adam Knight

fourth book, The Open Labyrinth, which is due out in 1986. Her first novel, Golden Vanity, was published in 1980, and a second, The Country of the Dead, is due out in 1986. — PK

Recommended books:

Do Androids Dream of Electric

Sheep? Philip K. Dick

One Hundred Years of Solitude

Gabriel Marcia Marquez

Shamanic Voices ed. Joan Halifax

The Tarot of Pamela Colman Smith

RACHEL POLLACK

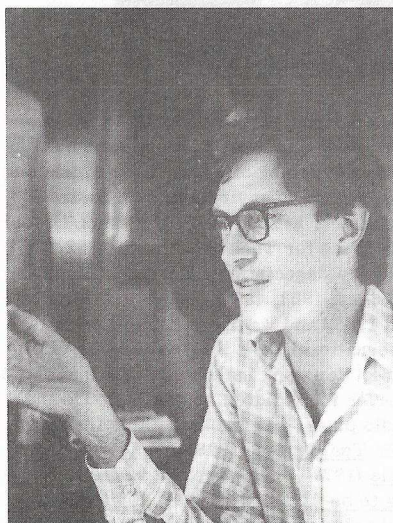
Eric Wulfert



Her first short story was published in 1971, and since then she has developed a considerable reputation among readers of such magazines as New Worlds Quarterly and Interzone. Her poetry has also been widely published in America and Europe. She is now widely known as an expert on the Tarot, having published the authoritative, two-volume 78 Degrees of Wisdom as well as Salvador Dali's Tarot, and a

GEOFF RYMAN

Lisa Tuttle



A Canadian who spent a good part of the 60s on America's West Coast before moving to Britain in the early 70s, his first story was "Diary of a Translator" in New Worlds Quarterly 10. There followed an unconscionable silence until 1984 when he dramatised Philip K. Dick's The Transmigration of Timothy Archer (the hit of the first Mexican), and his superb novella "The Unconquered Country" appeared in Interzone (and won the BSFA Award for best short fiction of 1984, plus the World

Fantasy Award). 1985 saw a new story, "O Happy Day", in Interzone, the First Anthology and his first novel, The Warrior Who Carried Life. Forthcoming is The Unconquered Country as an illustrated book. — PK

Recommended books:

Winnie-the-Pooh and

The House at Pooh Corner

Anything by Philip K. Dick

The London A-Z

impossible to talk about it and has two hopes for the near future: to qualify as a traditional Chinese acupuncturist and to write something which sf fans will really enjoy." — PK

Recommended films etc:

The Car

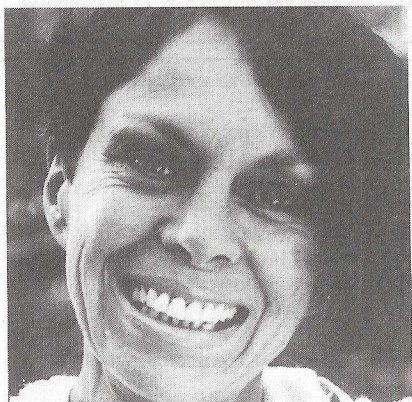
Waiting for Godot Samuel Beckett

Monty Python

Breakdance

The Indiana Jones movies

JOSEPHINE SAXTON



Her first story, "The Wall", appeared in 1965, and since then Josephine Saxton has been delighting a steady coterie of discriminating fans without really seeming to make the breakthrough that has always been promised. She calls herself "the writer who annoys sf fans by not writing sf and annoys mainstream readers by writing sf. She has been doing this in print for 21 years but perhaps not enough." Her four novels published to date have been The Hieros Gamos of Sam and An Smith (1969), Vector for Seven (1970), Group Feast (1971) and The Travails of Jane Saint (1980). A new collection of stories, The Power of Time (1985), is hopefully the harbinger of her long-awaited breakthrough, with three more books due in 1986. Josephine Saxton adds: "She likes being a Taoist because it is

ALEX STEWART



Alex Stewart began writing professionally in 1982 with "Seasons Out of Time" in Interzone, which has since published two more stories. In 1985 he successfully applied for a Business Enterprise Allowance as a full-time writer. His articles have appeared in White Dwarf and New Statesman. — CG

Inspirations:

Thunderbirds

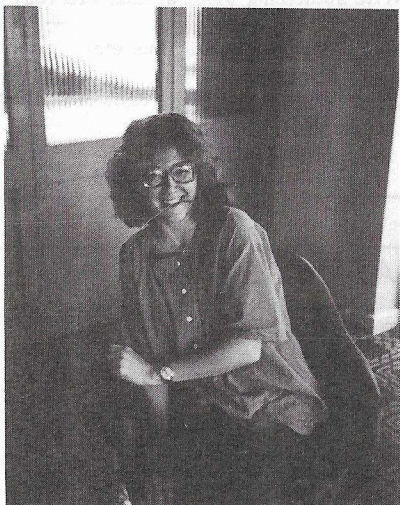
The Final Reflection John M. Ford

The Leaky Establishment

David Langford

LISA TUTTLE

Dave Garnett



In 1974 Lisa Tuttle won the John W. Campbell Award as the best new writer, a promise she was already beginning to fulfil with a string of stories that had started to appear in the Clarion anthologies and a number of magazines. Though most of her work, such as "The Family Monkey", shows a talent for unease, her best known work to date is probably her collaboration with George R. R. Martin, "Storms of Windhaven", which was subsequently expanded into a novel. She has also written a horror novel, Familiar Spirit, and there are regular tantalising mentions of a short story collection. She is currently working on a Dictionary of Feminism. A product of the Clarion workshops in America, she is currently chairman of the Milford Workshops in Britain. — PK

Recommended books:

Les Guerilleres Monique Wittig

The Magus John Fowles

The Owl Service Alan Garner

Woman on the Edge of Time

Marge Piercy

Jane Eyre Charlotte Bronte

TED WHITE

What can we say about Ted that he hasn't already said himself several times over? He's been in fandom longer than Rob Hansen has been alive, put-out his first fanzine as a teenager, was a founding member of EC comics fandom, and duplicated the first issues of Crawdaddy, the music magazine, in his basement. He's moved consistently sideways ever since. He has also been (is) a professional writer and editor, mostly within the sf field (Amazing, Heavy Metal) but has only occasionally let this get in the way of his fannish career. — AC

Pen-portraits above written by:

AC — Avedon Carol

CG — Colin Greenland

DG — David Garnett

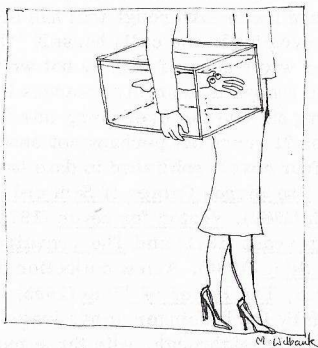
RH — Rob Hansen

RJ — Rob Jackson

PK — Paul Kincaid

MP — Maureen Porter

Typed names beside photos are photo credits.



Programme

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Location of events & facilities

Main programme: Second floor, between registration desk and bar.

Fan room: Second floor, through bar and main dining room, turn right.

Book rooms: Second floor, on lower level near lifts.

Short Story Workshop: Board Room, 6th floor. (Saturday 11 am on: openended.)

Toilets: 2 sets on second floor: near registration desk; & into dining room & turn left.

Mealtimes

Breakfast: 7.30-9.30 am Sat & Mon., 7.30-10.00 Sunday.

Lunch: 12.00-2.00 pm. } Prices for the meals specially arranged for the

Supper: 6.00-7.30 pm. } convention should vary between £1.25 & £2.00.

Late snack: 10.30-12.00 midnight. } Those of you resident in the hotel should have received your breakfast/lunch vouchers on checking in at hotel reception; these can obviously be used either for breakfast or lunch on any given day.

Bar times

Open till 2.00 am Friday and Saturday for all convention members, and later for hotel residents assuming the demand is there (which, knowing convention members, we do assume).

To help the hotel staff, PLEASE WEAR YOUR CONVENTION BADGE AT ALL TIMES, so that staff can be sure you're part of the convention. This is especially important at the bar late at night. Maybe we don't need no steenkin' badges, but the hotel staff do: it's their drinks licence!

PROGRAMME

Friday 7 February

- 7.00 pm OPENING CEREMONY followed by QUESTION TIME. Your questions answered; wisdom on the state of life, sf and fandom; chaired by Greg Pickersgill, with Chris Evans, Ted White, Caroline Mullan, Kev Williams.
- 8.30 pm IAIN BANKS
Talk.
- 9.30 pm DID TOLKIEN TAKE A WRONG TURN? The state of fantasy today.
Joan Aiken, Colin Greenland, Geoff Ryman, M. John Harrison, Gwyneth Jones (Chair).

- 10.30 pm DIVERSION DESESPERADO
A game compered by Neil Hepple in which five teams of two test their speed, physical skill and knowledge.
- 11.30 pm Film: SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN (1969) dir. Gordon Hessler.
A straightforward entertaining horror film, mad doctor, a new super race, vats of acid and disappearing limbs, not to mention one of the most memorable scenes from the Amicus days of a humanoid tearing his own handcuffed arm off to escape the police.

Saturday 8 February

- 10.00 am SATURDAY MORNING PICTURES
A collection of cartoons by Tex Avery, the madman genius of the cartoon world.
- 11.00 am SCIENCE FICTION'S STUPID IDEAS. What made sf what it is?
Neil Gaiman, Dave Garnett, Garry Kilworth, Dave Langford (Chair).
- 12.00 nn ALAN MOORE
Question and answer session. Rob Hansen chairs.
- 1.00 pm TRUFANS vs. THE REST
A panel organised by Abi Frost which looks at the divide between "traditional" sf fandom and sub-genre or specialist fandoms.
- 2.00 pm PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN'S FICTION. Is it really what we think it is?
Joan Aiken, Jan Mark, Gwyneth Jones, Nick Lowe (Chair).
- 3.00 pm WOMEN IN FANDOM
Avedon Carol, Kate Davies, Andy Robertson, Dave Wood, Christina Lake (Chair).
- 4.00 pm IN TRANSLATION. How to turn a book into a play or film or...
Steve Gallagher, Geoff Ryman, Alan Moore, Clive Barker (Chair).
- 5.00 pm WILLIAM GIBSON
An interview by Mike Dickinson
- 6.00 pm BRAIN OF MEXICON
Your chance to win the coveted, unique Brain of Mexicon poncho plus a £20 book token — provided you answer the competition enclosed with PR4 (more copies available via Registration) by Saturday morning; you could be a finalist!
- 7.00 pm WHY WE WRITE. A variety of writers attempt an answer.
Fan: Anne Hamill, Pro: Jan Mark, Critic: John Clute, Comics: Alan Moore, Chair: Rachel Pollack.
- 8.00 pm FANS vs. PROS. Quiz compered by Alan Dorey.
Pro team includes Brian Aldiss, Neil Gaiman, John Clute.
- 9.00 pm A SHIVER UP THE SPINE. The use of horror in fiction.
Joan Aiken, Clive Barker, Iain Banks, K.W. Jeter, Kim Newman (Chair).

11.00 am SHORT
STORY WORKSHOP
Lisa Tuttle (Chair).

- 10.00 pm Films: GREENAWAY SHORTS. Peter Greenaway is a director with imagination and a unique point of view. Fans of The Draughtsman's Contract or those who have seen A Zed and Two Noughts ought to enjoy this programme of 4 short films.
- 10.30 pm AN INTERVIEW WITH KEITH ROBERTS
Interviewer: Paul Kincaid.
- 11.30 pm DISCO
Get up and boogie — you've got loads of energy left!

Sunday 9 February

- 11.00 am TRANSATLANTIC ECHOES. The American viewpoint.
William Gibson, K.W. Jeter, Avedon Carol, Ted White (Chair).
- 12.00 pm WHOSE CAKE IS IT ANYWAY ? A talk by Pamela Buckmaster.
- 1.00 pm AUCTION. Good material accepted for sale, either on your behalf or for Good Causes. Contact Greg Pickersgill in advance with a list of items for sale.
- 2.00 pm TED WHITE
Talk.
- 3.00 pm SUBVERTING SEX ROLES. Is sf really as dangerous as we think?
Gwyneth Jones, Josephine Saxton, Iain Banks, Geoff Ryman (Chair).
- 4.00 pm Film: BORN IN FLAMES (1983) dir. Lizzie Borden.
A film about sexual politics, race, class and the role of the media. The story is set in an allegorical future 10 years after a peaceful revolution has taken place in America and women begin to realise that not a lot has changed for them.
- 5.30 pm HOW WE WORK. Secrets of the craft of writer.
Steve Gallagher, Garry Kilworth, Dave Garnett, Alex Stewart (Chair).
- 6.30 pm WHAT IS FAN WRITING?
Hazel Ashworth, Simon Ounsley, Jimmy Robertson, Lilian Edwards (Chair).
- 7.30 pm REAPPRAISAL. What effect has the Golden Age had on today's writers?
William Gibson, Neil Gaiman, Kim Newman, Dave Langford.
- 8.30 pm SUPREMACY
A contest of discrimination, wit and ability compered by Kev and Sue Williams.
- 9.30 pm CLOSING CEREMONY followed by DISCUSSION.
The Committee sits down and takes it; your opportunity to discuss the week-end's events with those responsible. Complaints, unsupported bitching, praise: we deal with it all. What did you really think? Get it all out in the open now!
- Followed by a PARTY, even for those whom the committee now hate and detest (see previous item). Includes the reappearance of Mexican Death Punch (not quite the same as Tequila Mockingbird, but Free Drink nonetheless).

COUNT ZERO

by William Gibson

First world publication
of the new novel by the
author of NEUROMANCER

February 269 pages \$9.95

***GOLLANCZ....
THE BEST IN
SCIENCE FICTION***

BLOOD MUSIC

by Greg Bear

Based on his Hugo and Nebula
Award winning story
"A Childhood's End for the
1980s"-- Locus

March 272 pages \$9.95

Gollancz

Booklist 1 - General

Mexicon 2 is a convention that aims to consider areas much wider than just genre science fiction. We therefore suggested to booksellers that in addition to straightforward sf titles, they might like to make available books that were only on the borders of sf. The following is the list of authors and titles that we suggested to them. Bear in mind that this list is by no means complete, and that other authors' work is worth exploring too. (Works by Doris Lessing, Thomas Pynchon and Salman Rushdie spring to mind — Ed.)

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
Peter ACKROYD	HAWKSMOOR	Hamish Hamilton
Robert AICKMAN	NIGHT VOICES	Gollancz
Isabel ALLENDE	THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS	Cape
John BANVILLE	DOCTOR COPERNICUS	Granada
"	KEPLER	"
Ambrose BIERCE	IN THE MIDST OF LIFE	
Jorge Luis BORGES	All titles	Penguin
Italo CALVINO	All titles	Secker/Picador
Peter CAREY	ILLYWHACKER	Faber
Angela CARTER	All titles	Chatto/Penguin/etc
Susan COOPER	THE DARK IS RISING sequence	Puffin
"	SEAWARD	"
Lawrence DURRELL	THE ALEXANDRIA QUARTET	Faber
"	TUNC & NUMQUAM	"
Umberto ECO	THE NAME OF THE ROSE	Secker
John FOWLES	THE MAGUS	Panther
Alan GARNER	All titles	Collins
Alasdair GRAY	All titles	Cape/Canongate/Penguin
Russell HOBAN	All titles	Cape/Picador
Joan HALIFAX ed.	SHAMANIC VOICES	
Geoffrey HOUSEHOLD	ARROWS OF DESIRE	Michael Joseph
Keri HULME	THE BONE PEOPLE	Spiral/Hodder & Stoughton
Denis JOHNSTON	FISKADORO	Chatto
Diana WYNNE JONES	All titles	Methuen/Puffin/Beaver
William KOTZWINKLE	All titles	Corgi
Manuel Mujica LAINEZ	THE WANDERING UNICORN	Chatto
Penelope LIVELY	All children's titles	Puffin
William MAYNE	A GRASS ROPE	
Gabriel Garcia MARQUEZ	All titles	
Ted MOONEY	EASY TRAVEL TO OTHER PLANETS	Arena
Marge PIERCY	WOMAN ON THE EDGE OF TIME	Women's Press
Herbert READ	THE GREEN CHILD	Penguin
Murasaki SHIKIBU	THE TALE OF GENJI	
Thorne SMITH	All titles	
D. M. THOMAS	All titles	Gollancz/Penguin
Barry UNSWORTH	THE STONE VIRGIN	Hamish Hamilton
Monique WITTIG	LES GUERRILLERES	
Timothy FINDLAY	NOT WANTED ON THE VOYAGE	Macmillan
Pat O'SHEA	THE HOUNDS OF THE MORRIGAN	O. U. P.

Booklist 2 ~ Authors at Mexican

This book list is not meant for completists, but we hope it includes the most recent, well-known and easily available titles by each author, at least.

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
Joan AIKEN	THE WOLVES OF WILLOUGHBY CHASE	Puffin
	BLACK HEARTS IN BATTERSEA	"
	NIGHTBIRDS OVER NANTUCKET	"
	THE STOLEN LAKE	"
	THE CUCKOO TREE	"
	THE SHADOW GUESTS	"
	GO SADDLE THE SEA	"
	THE WHISPERING MOUNTAIN	"
	MIDNIGHT IS A PLACE	"
	A TOUCH OF CHILL	Fontana
	A WHISPER IN THE NIGHT	"
Brian ALDISS	THE PRIMAL URGE	
	THE MALE RESPONSE	
	THE HORATIO STUBBS SAGA (THE HAND-REARED BOY, A SOLDIER ERECT, A RUDE AWAKENING)	
	THE MALACIA TAPESTRY	
	NON-STOP	
	GALAXIES LIKE GRAINS OF SAND	
	HOTHOUSE	
	GREYBEARD	
	EARTHWORKS	
	THE DARK LIGHT YEARS	
	BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD	
	THE EIGHTY MINUTE HOUR	
	REPORT ON PROBABILITY A	
	FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND	
	MOREAU'S OTHER ISLAND	
	BROTHERS OF THE HEAD	
	THE MOMENT OF ECLIPSE	
	SPACE, TIME AND NATHANIEL	
	LAST ORDERS	
	SEASONS IN FLIGHT	
	BILLION YEAR SPREE	
Iain BANKS	HELLICONIA SPRING	
	HELLICONIA SUMMER	
	HELLICONIA WINTER	
Clive BARKER	THE WASP FACTORY	Futura
	WALKING ON GLASS	Macmillan
	THE BOOKS OF BLOOD 1-6	
Neil GAIMAN & Kim NEWMAN	THE DAMNATION GAME	Wiedenfeld
	GHASTLY BEYOND BELIEF	

Steve GALLAGHER	THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER CHIMERA FOLLOWER DYING OF PARADISE THE ICE BELT THE BOAT HOUSE	
William GIBSON	NEUROMANCER	Gollancz/Grafton
K.W. JETER	SEEKLIGHT THE DREAMFIELDS MORLOCK NIGHT SOUL EATER DR. ADDER THE GLASS HAMMER NIGHT VISION INFERNAL DEVICES MANTIS	Laser " DAW Tor Bluejay " Tor Bluejay Tor
Gwyneth JONES	WATER IN THE AIR THE INFLUENCE OF IRONWOOD THE EXCHANGE DEAR HILL DIVINE ENDURANCE	Macmillan " " " Allen & Unwin
(as Ann Halam)	ALLY ALIY ASTER	Macmillan
"	THE ALDER TREE	"
Garry KILWORTH	IN SOLITARY THE NIGHT OF KADAR SPLIT SECOND GEMINI GOD A THEATRE OF TIMESMITHS THE SONGBIRDS OF PAIN	Faber " " " Gollancz "
Dave LANGFORD	WAR IN 2080 AN ACCOUNT OF A MEETING WITH DENIZENS OF ANOTHER WORLD THE SPACE EATER THE LEAKY ESTABLISHMENT THE THIRD MILLENNIUM (with Brian Stableford)	David & Charles/Sphere David & Charles Arrow Muller
Jan MARK	THUNDER AND LIGHTNINGS UNDER THE AUTUMN GARDEN THE ENNEAD DIVIDE AND RULE AQUARIUS THE SHORT VOYAGE OF THE ALBERT ROSS NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF HAIRS IN THE PALM OF THE HAND THE DEAD LETTER BOX HANDLES FEET AND OTHER STORIES AT THE SIGN OF THE DOG AND ROCKET TROUBLE HALFWAY IZZY	Puffin " Puffin Plus Kestrel " Granada Puffin " Young Puffin Puffin Puffin Plus Longman Viking Kestrel Longman
Kim NEWMAN	NIGHTMARE MOVIES	

Rachel POLLACK

GOLDEN VANITY

THE COUNTRY OF THE DEAD

(due 1986)

SEVENTY-EIGHT DEGREES OF WISDOM.

A BOOK OF TAROT parts 1 & 2

Aquarian Press

SALVADOR DALI'S TAROT

THE OPEN LABYRINTH

(due 1986)

THE WARRIOR WHO CARRIED LIFE

Allen & Unwin

THE UNCONQUERED COUNTRY

"

(due 1986)

(also in INTERZONE: THE FIRST ANTHOLOGY)

Geoff RYMAN

The Prose and the Passion,

ROB JACKSON

looks at the artistic personality
and creative stress, in particular
summarising work by Dr. Anthony
Storr, who has done vital thinking
on this subject

If the phrase "personality and creative stress" is ambiguous to you, that's just how it is meant to be. For creating new things can be stressful, but stress can be creative.

Many writers and other people with creative tasks in mind have moaned on, in person and in print, about the stresses arising from the creative effort; but the stresses, both internal and external to the person, that give rise to the creative effort are just as much written about, but less well understood by some. The freedoms, internal and external, that allow creative work may merit examination too.

Some might expect creative people not to wish to examine their motives too closely, fearing that their psyches are houses of cards which if touched might come tumbling down, or (to pick a less dramatically destructive metaphor) a sort of Transformer toy, which if examined or fiddled with might end up a different shape, seeming to serve a different purpose — but Dr. Anthony Storr among others disagrees with these fears.

Selfexamination often can have its dangers — for a simple example, selfconsciousness is closely associated with (though not synonymous with) anxiety when among others. But it may have its benefits too — selfconsciousness can also be absorbed and developed as a person matures, to become a deeper selfknowledge that brings a sense of inner certainty and selfassurance. This may apply both to developing a sense of ease in company, and to gaining a sense of surety about one's own creative wellsprings.

So we may assume that self-examination (navel-contemplation if you like, but that has sterile, negative connotations) or at least examination of the creative process in others has its risks, but also its benefits, and that potentially the benefits may outweigh the risks.

Many people in sf, both in the professional world and in fandom, disagree with the timidity described in the third paragraph above, and would like to look at the creative pro-

Josephine SAXTON THE HIEROS GAMOS OF SAM AND AN SMITH
 VECTOR FOR SEVEN
 GROUP FEAST
 THE TRAVAILS OF JANE SAINT
 THE POWER OF TIME
 Lisa TUTTLE WINDHAVEN (with George R.R. Martin)
 FAMILIAR SPIRIT
 CATWITCH (with Una Woodruff)

Chatto

the Real and the Dream

cess and hang, or at least cope with, any consequences. Or even learn something. The theme of this convention, Creativity in SF, implies that, though I wouldn't be so pretentious as to imply that such highflown thoughts generated the theme — I think the committee started with the question: "How is sf imagined, written, drawn, sung or published?" rather than any grand motive to achieve total understanding of the creative process.

However, once you start asking the question and trying to get even a partial answer, you're into the area of the imaginative subconscious anyway — so you may as well hold your nose and jump in, trying not to gulp too much water.

What does make us — yes, all of us; no member of humanity is completely devoid of creativity — wish to process our understanding of the universe and reshape it? A wish to increase that understanding, presumably; but what other motivation? In particular, what hubris drives some of us to reshape that understanding in the form of sf narrative, set in a world different from the one we now inhabit in ways subtle or gross, and hope for that narrative to be disseminated for public consumption and posterity?

What, indeed, makes me write this article?

I'll describe the genesis of this article now, not so that I can use it to describe the creative process (it isn't a very creative article, being largely derived from other people's thoughts) but because I can thus introduce Dr. Anthony Storr and his work. He is a writer and psychiatrist (his works include The Integrity of the Personality, Sexual Deviation, and The Dynamics of Creation, all available in Pelican, among others) whose thinking on this topic has much to offer in its human understanding as well as his extraordinary breadth of knowledge and erudition. In The Dynamics of Creation he stands on the border between science and art (if there is a clear-cut one, which I very much doubt), a grey area which in a different way many sf writers inhabit. Most of our invited speakers this weekend would see themselves more on the artistic side of that division, though, many of them using speculative or fantasy techniques or settings in their work without necessarily considering themselves part of sf as a genre.

The Creativity theme was picked out by the Mexicon 2 committee early in 1985; soon after that, in March, Dr. Storr was invited to speak at the hospital where I work, giving a major annual lecture which has been endowed by a benefactor for education on the topic of depression. His topic was Depression and Creativity.

Naturally this topic fascinated me as a meeting point between my own work (psychiatry) and my major interest (sf and fandom), so the lecture connected with Mexican 2's theme to such an extent that the con would seem thoroughly incomplete without reference to the concepts not only in the lecture, but also the broader concepts given in detail in The Dynamics of Creation, which I read later.

Dr. Storr's breadth of knowledge means he can with equal sureness cover literary and psychological topics. In conversation afterwards I gathered he has a high regard for fantasy and sf (and knows Brian Aldiss quite well — so at this con, Brian may be able to enlarge on — or disagree with — what I am writing here).

His talk naturally looked primarily at the psychological side, beginning by describing writers, musicians and others who suffered from major episodes of depression, going on to ask why the connection seemed to exist, and positing a number of possible answers. Genetic and biochemical theories were skated over quickly; he pointed out that depressive psychosis can be brought on in anyone given severe enough stress (torture, sensory deprivation) and suggested that many artists are hypersensitive to depression and compensate by seeking a sense of mastery over their environment, or the increased self-esteem that goes with recognition (cf. Virginia Woolf's suicide after a bad review). He also suggested that depressive personalities are underassertive and that creativity can be a sublimation (transformation into another form) of anger that is not vested elsewhere — this being one possible reason why some writers are disappointing to meet in person (I hope that doesn't prove true too often this weekend). Creativity may also attempt to repair pangs of early loss, and can often have a compulsive quality, as shown by some artists who are only happy when in the process of creating, becoming dissatisfied once a work is complete, or even depressed until the process can restart ("no work of art is ever finished, it is only abandoned"). An artist's search for personal maturity and peace can often be conducted through the medium of his work rather than his relationships — hence the self-preoccupied, narcissistic flavour of some creative people's personalities. Newton was a very suspicious man with a powerful need to find a sense of order in the world to compensate for his sense of alienation and detachment from it; this may have driven him to his discoveries. Dr. Storr suggested that great philosophers more often than not have an inability to make fully mature relationships which becomes part of their drive to understand the world.

He concluded with some very cutting remarks about the passive noncreativity of the near-universal panacea of TV — Harlan Ellison's "glass teat" (my quote not his), and suggested that a televisual society is one more prone to depression for this reason. (I'd add myself that reading, demanding as it does a greater imaginative effort than watching TV — you fill the visual gaps yourself — is considerably more active a process than developing square eyes.)

Summarised baldly like that, the lecture makes writers and other creators sound an appallingly neurotic lot — but as I said, he was relating creativity to depression for the purpose of the lecture. In The Dynamics of Creation he sets out almost from the start the view that creation is normal and healthy, and all the more worthy of comprehension for that reason; in fact, in his introduction he criticises many psychoanalytical writers, including Freud himself, for their failure to make adequate distinction between art and neurosis: "since the former is one of the blessings of mankind, whereas the latter is one of the curses, it seems a pity that they should not be better differentiated." Not all creative people are driven by neurosis or incipient psychosis, nor is it convincing to assume (as Freud did) that creation derives from the primitive drives of sex and aggression. Freud tended to the view that regular satisfactory adult sexual relationships would solve all emotional problems, and half-assumed this would reduce creativity — but in fact many very creative people have had good, stable sex lives.

Certainly there have been some writers who create as wish-fulfilment; Ian Fleming

had to worship a "dead hero" father and failed to keep up with an elder brother's achievements when young, and compensated by imbuing James Bond with many qualities he himself lacked — masculinity, connoisseurship of food and wine, self-assurance in a broader sense. Romantic fiction of the Mills & Boon kind is also erotic wish-fulfilment, though many of its readers don't acknowledge this in themselves. Some sf critics feel the same can be said of the Gor books as sadomasochistic fantasies. However, writers who see art as serving this purpose only are ignoring the fact that the best art fulfils its intended purpose of taking us closer to, not further from, reality and an appreciation of it.

If they are not just escaping from reality, what do artistic people think they are doing? Many people have talent but lack the drive or application to formulate their fantasies into usable form, whether those talents and fantasies are verbal, visual or musical. Why do those who have the drive, maintain it? Power? Very few artists or writers become powerful, say as politicians or businessmen. Very few even make a living from their work: even some well-known names have to work elsewhere. Some artists are driven by a need to show off or obtain love or sexual fulfilment, but very few. Storr concludes that artists are on the whole neither more or less successful at getting and keeping the love of partners than other individuals.

Fame and renown are magnets for many artists, but there exist many others who shun the limelight, and Storr quotes one composer who worked in total isolation for twenty years without even his closest friends knowing of the existence of a huge body of good work. This is unusual, though: most artists have some desire to communicate, at least indirectly. Fame is easier to come by than through being a great artist, though: is Terry Wogan a great artist? For most artists, fame is welcome, if at all, as a byproduct of artistic success rather than as an end in itself. Even within the sf field, which because of the convention-going culture of fandom is more convivial than many other fields of art, most authors limit their attendance at conventions for more reasons than just financial. Conventions are a kind of light, almost manic relief between the hard grind both of artistic endeavour and one's other everyday concerns; too many of them and it diverts the concentration from one's work. There are, of course, many writers who prefer to avoid direct contact with the reader almost completely; and if this is their preference, then one must respect it.

Some artists and thinkers can work fast, producing finished work within weeks, for example Mozart, and within the sf field Moorcock (though Moorcock's best works are reputedly slower to emerge than his more routine S&S output; if this is not the case I hope someone at the convention can enlighten me on this. Can anyone at the convention inform me of outstanding sf novels produced really fast?). Others incubate great work for years: for example Darwin's work on the origin of species was in his mind for twenty years or so.

Why, then, do most artists go through hard and agonising weeks, months, years to give birth to their brainchildren? Is it to obtain an outlet for urges not releasable elsewhere, or to fend off unpleasant states of mind? Is it, in other words, for defence of the ego?

At this point let me divert to give you a few definitions. Storr's argument now examines various types of personality, the distresses to which they are prone, and the drives which may arise from a need to ward off those distresses and so give a need to create; so let me try to define some types of personality for you.

Some classifications of personality are monothetic, i.e. all-or-nothing, entailing the allocation of individuals into little boxes one or other side of a fixed boundary. In my view (and, I am sure, Dr. Storr's) these classifications are rigid and simplistic, and it's far more appropriate and flexible to have classifications which allow people to be variably endowed with certain characteristics, i.e. polythetic classifications.

One classification which I like has five major characteristics — schizoidia, obsessiveness, hystericality, passivity, and social deviance; Dr. Storr uses another, manic-

WILLIAM GIBSON ***NEUROMANCER***

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depressive temperament, which can appropriately be placed alongside those five. Schizoid people are suspicious, emotionally rather cold, and have difficulty relating their feelings to those of other people and events, as well as emotionally isolated. Obsessional people are rigid, punctual, exact, conscientious and inflexible: bank clerks. Hysterical people are prone to wear all their feelings on the surface, dramatic but variable and shallow in emotion; very flexible, though: actors. Passive people are indecisive and depend on others. Socially deviant people are impulsive, lacking in conscience, and fail to learn from their mistakes. Manic-depressive people (people with this character, not the illness) have a different type of variability of mood from hysterics: it's more persistent, with distinct spells of high confidence, assertiveness and selfishness alternating with spells of under-confidence, underassertiveness and ingratitude to others for fear of being disliked. Many people are depressive personalities with rare or absent manic spells.

Each of these personality types has its good points as well as its bad ones. A round-ed personality will have bits of all six, including social deviance — people with inadequate social deviance are the sort who actually do 30 mph in a built-up area, and where does that get them? It gets them into cars with rear view windows full of nodding pandas, and stickers saying "Bridlington" and "When I grow up I want to be a Rolls-Royce", that's where. Obsessional-schizoid people probably grow up to be computer programmers (or did, before computer programmers were everywhere); spies are probably a combination of hysterical (acting ability, changeability) and schizoid (ability to be aloof from what is going on, and tendency to think in conspiracy theories); squaddies are probably somewhat passive-social deviant (easily led and look for structure and guidance, yet can act on impulse and not mind the idea of killing all that much).

How do these different types of personality lead to a need to create? If it's a defence against unpleasant states of mind, what forms can that unpleasantness take? To answer that question, let me briefly try to outline some theories of character development, which I think are those accepted by most psychoanalytical thinkers as well as by more behaviourally oriented psychiatrists to some extent.

Broadly speaking, the more mature one's personality is, the less one sees oneself as the centre of the universe. The most primitive form of emotional development is the paranoid/schizoid position, in which people are either all good or all bad, and one's view even of those closest to one (say, an infant's view of its mother) is that the other person is either wonderful or appalling and nothing in between; which state of mind one is in determines how you see your mother at the time, or whoever. At this stage, babies are not even fully aware that one's mother is a separate person; similarly, schizoid people fail fully to realise the personhood of other people, their equality to oneself. Hence the tendency of such people to think it's one law for themselves and another for everyone else: I can hit you but you can't hit me back. It's the schizoid person against the world: there's nothing wrong with me, I don't hate the world, so the hate I feel must be the world hating me. This very primitive defence mechanism is called projection, and it relates to the traits of the schizoid person described above; this is where the tendency to suspicion comes from, and it's linked to the great difficulty the schizoid person has linking their inner world with reality. Their emotions are split: both from reality and from each other (good/bad ones). Storr and others see the difficulty this creates, the negative state of mind that can be avoided by creative thought, as a state of withdrawn futility: the world seems useless because one can't connect with it.

Babies, or most of them at least, are thought to mature from a schizoid position by grasping the fact that one's mother and other people really exist as a separate entity, and that they are neither perfect nor horrid but imperfect. The wistful acceptance of this is called the depressive position; acceptance that the world is neither benign nor hostile but essentially neutral is depressing. However, the child (or adult) in this state of mind

attempts to resolve the situation by winning the love and approval of others; hence the ingratiating, underassertive attitude taken by depressive personalities. If I'm good will you love me? This depression is the second major unpleasant state of mind listed by Storr that writers and other creative people may need to escape from by creating, both directly via their own self-esteem or via the esteem of others. The manic phase, in which one is over-assertive and selfish, may be a time of productivity for some people of manic-depressive people — at least, it's fitting that my wife sometimes drops hints that I'm selfish sitting here typing instead of doing the washing-up!

The next phase of emotional development is said to be the anal phase in Freud's terminology (the schizoid and manic-depressive both fit into the oral phase in his scheme). In this, the child begins to challenge the power of the parent to do things to and for him (temper tantrums) and the parent begins to get the child to exert self-control (potty training — hence the anal stage being its name). This phase is about bringing order out of chaos, and avoiding disorder; so people who are stuck here have an obsessional character.

After this, toddlers become more aware that their parents are separate individuals, and though babies seem to many people to be aware which sex they are (aware instinctively rather than consciously, that is) at a very early stage, at around the age of two to three they start to be fond particularly of the parent of the opposite sex. This is the libidinal or Oedipal phase (Oedipus, you will remember, having fallen in love with his mother). Kids who get stuck at this stage tend to have difficulty learning the limits of emotional expression, and thus with making lasting relationships at times: it is associated with the emotional shallowness and variability of the hysterical personality.

Passivity and social deviance perhaps also relate to difficulties at pretty early stages of development: passivity may relate to an inability to learn decision-making and confidence because one's independence was stifled by overprotection or alternatively a lack of support to develop the sense of sureness required to leave the safety of one's mother; and social deviance, which is closely akin to the older concept of psychopathy, relates to an inadequate development of the parental control that is later incorporated into one's psyche as the conscience — an opposite fault to the overcontrol characteristic of obsessionals and to a lesser extent of depressive personalities.

If all the above sounds appallingly abnormal, bear in mind that these emotions are largely subconscious, or even pre-conscious: most workers in this field believe that these emotions are contained not in the cortex, but in the older parts of the brain, the more primitive areas, which are incapable of holding verbal memory — and most of our conscious mind, or ideas and concepts of the universe, are held in the cortex, the most advanced part of the human brain. This is, I would guess, why we aren't properly conscious of all that personality development within our own memories, and we tend only to learn about it either through instinctual experience or through the theorising of psychiatrists.

Which aspects of these personality types may make people creative?

Schizoid people are to some extent at odds with reality, at least emotionally. But if they are intelligent enough to be in close touch with physical reality, then the strong drive to bridge the emotional gap between their inner world and external truth may produce some of the greatest and profoundest theories of mankind. Descartes, Newton and Einstein were all schizoid personalities who in their varying ways were thus driven. There are a number of reasons why schizoid people may be driven to create. First, their solitary nature may lead them to create a world where they are in control, and they can relate indirectly to the outside world. Second, they can retain a fantasy of omnipotence and superiority. Third, their inner life can be made flesh, which reflects the importance of their own psyches which seem to be greater than the rest of the world. Fourth, it imposes order and overcomes a sense of chaotic unpredictability. (This mechanism or something similar can be seen in obsessional people: see below.) Fifth, creating one's own scheme can defend

one from the threat of the world seeming meaningless or futile, as ordinary relationships are less satisfactory, and can't "get through" or bridge the big gap between their psyches and the rest of the world.

Manic-depressive people are sometimes convinced that their own loved ones do not love them, so "may seek to win a more general recognition of (their) merits by acquiring public acclaim." Sometimes the creative work is imbued with such importance that the creator dare not complete it, as its completion would be a kind of death. Writers' block may develop through a number of depressive mechanisms: fear of the work's rejection, fear of completion as just described, or a vicious circle in which guilt at not doing it, created by one's own overactive conscience, is itself paralysing and continues to stop further work. However, the manic phase of such mood cycles can be quite constructive (as long as it is not associated with actual manic illness): one can rebel against one's predecessors in a creative way, which can both get aggression out of one's system and boost self-esteem. Bernard Berenson has described genius as the "capacity for productive reaction against one's training": true for at least some. Another form of manic defence is to be ceaselessly active: this is particularly common in politics and high finance, but some creators have shown it too. (Within the sf field, I'm sure most of us can think of people who have produced reams of rubbish non-stop...)

The obsessional personality's love of rigid order might militate against the free-wheeling thinking necessary for creativity in some ways, but such people have very strong drives to create order out of perceived chaos, and also have a tendency to be workaholic: so get things done. Sometimes, too, obsessional people can vent feelings or ideas in their work that they find unacceptable in everyday life: they can rebel against "the inhibitions of conscience, and the compulsions of exactitude." The playwright Ibsen regularly portrayed idealised sexual relationships in his plays though he found physical contact distasteful himself. The creation of rituals or symbols is also a way of bringing order out of chaos; the more intelligent one is, the more one can make use of symbols. (Storr links this to the fact that poorly educated people respond less well to pornography: it may not be art, but one needs imagination to respond to it none the less!) The drive to create order out of chaos can be very helpful to scientists: an obsessional scientist will worry away like a terrier at a fact that won't fit.

The drive to create order out of chaos, or at least to create rules and rituals and codes by which one human can understand another and bring structure to relationships, is a universal human drive, though, not restricted to one type of personality. This leads us on to more universal aspects of the creative drive. We create language to codify ideas; we create games and sports to codify competitive aggression and the establishment of dominance and pecking orders; and above all we play.

What is play for? Is it mere discharge of excess physical energy? If so, why do animals play even if tired? Is it to learn things, practice handling the world? Possibly — but why is it fun? Learning about the world could be done seriously instead; but in fact there seems to be pleasure linked to it. Apes can enjoy making pictures, painting, so much that they forget to eat, and have tantrums if the materials are removed. One explanation is that humans (and to some extent other primates) are opportunistic animals as opposed to specialists (say, purely hunters or grass-eaters). To take opportunities, one needs to be constantly alert, so one's nervous system is, one could suppose, likely to function best if it is constantly receiving varied stimuli; being kept interested. Play, then, could be a source of stimulation and learning, and possibly we are programmed to enjoy doing something which helps us learn and thus improves our chances of survival in the world, just as we are programmed to enjoy sex and the rearing of children, which although damned hard work (the rearing of children, that is — though come to think of it the sex is damned hard work for some people too) also ensures the survival of the species in general, and our own gen-

etic make-up in particular.

Another function of play is that hinted at above — to codify aggression and prevent it getting out of hand, and allow the establishment of pecking orders while ensuring the losers survive. Anyone who watches a game of tennis or cricket can see they are profoundly ritualised forms of competition. (So are quizzes at conventions.) They are social activities, needing some degree of cooperation, yet also involve competition. Social activities in lower life-forms such as ants are purely cooperative; humans, though, have both cooperative and competitive instincts, and there is a necessary tension between the two sets of instincts. (From personal experience I can confirm that I am much less tense if I am able to do something that is neither work nor connected with looking after home and family — in other words, play, e.g. fannish activity, releases my aggression.)

Social play is essential among monkeys if they are to learn to relate to their peers well enough to be able to mate; deprivation experiments have shown this to be even more important than contact with their mother after birth. Monkeys cut off from their peers for the first six months are fearfully helpless among peers; if cut off for the second six months they are very over-aggressive. Parallels can be found in people with neurotic problems: some fear others and are ingratiating, others can't bear not to be boss, and others still alternate; the turning worm. These people are like the monkeys in not knowing the right levels of assertion or aggression, and presumably were also lacking in chances to learn to find their place in the pecking order when growing up.

Social sexual play also helps children learn the facts of life and makes them less guilty and more likely to be able to have satisfactory sexual relationships when adult. Adult parties are largely sexual display games, chances for flirtation without serious contact. Without an opportunity to learn the facts of sexual relationships, naive people are likely to "fall in love" in the devastating, idealised, romantic way that is probably followed by a hurtful break or by a disillusioningly difficult marriage. To idealise someone completely, to refuse to see anything wrong with them, is just as split, primitive and unreal a way of feeling as the other schizoid emotions described above — but, strangely, much of our culture is romantically dumb enough to encourage this. Thank goodness for more realistic, artistic writers, including many in science fiction.

Is the creation of art another form of play? Although creativity can result from escapism, the sublimation of sexual or aggressive drives, or the need to fend off schizoid alienation or depression, healthy states of mind can surely be creative too. Storr quotes Lionel Trilling: "... the illusions of art are made to serve the purpose of a closer and truer relation with reality."

This drive to be closer to the truth, to understand the nature of the world better, can be seen even in the most primitive cultures; for example the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico (ha! — a Mexican connection, nearly!) who perform daily rituals at dawn to help the sun to rise. They feel they are involving themselves in the universe. Similarly, you involve yourself with, and understand, an animal better if you draw it than if you just look at it. However, that involvement must not be over-close: objectivity is needed, and abstraction is the beginning of wisdom. Proust, in *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, examines this; Storr says "As every novelist knows, it is only when time has intervened that this transmutation becomes possible. The more profound an emotional experience, the more essential it is to distance oneself from it." Graham Wallas named this process the periods of preparation and incubation; in the latter, conscious thought on the topic needs to be abandoned, and the concepts left to mature in the subconscious. The abstraction, once complete, can be enriching: "Every serious reader will be able to recall instances of how a writer has made him aware of aspects of reality which were previously unrecognised by him." However, one must not fall into the trap of thinking that an abstraction, insight or symbol is all-embracing; it leaves one less able to accept or create another new thing. Major leaps

forward can be difficult to accept for those too attached to the old; controversies have been created by Impressionism in painting, Stravinsky's Rite of Spring in music, and in sf the New Wave in both its New Worlds and Dangerous Visions incarnations. These leaps forward undermined some cherished views of conservative thinkers.

Why do we cherish a sense of order, and what drives us to create order out of chaos? Storr at this point turns to re-examine the link between man's inner, emotional world and the outer world of reality, and says we need to get both of them into some kind of understandable shape. Even if you don't always remember your sense of order consciously, it can still be a big help to have it in the back of your mind; Bob Shaw, in an article on the benefits of reading, once said something like "Once you have read a book and then forgotten it, what you're left with is a different kind of ignorance." Bob described this "different kind of ignorance" as being a kind of subconscious matrix on which further knowledge could be hung. This, though, is only subconscious in the sense of being something once consciously known and then forgotten; Storr points out there is a further need, to gain a sense of order which helps one cope with one's unconscious, primitive impulsive emotions, as laid down in the primitive parts of the brain in babyhood (see above).

How do we know this primitive emotional world exists, and what does it do? I partly answered this a few pages back; but another indicator this world is real is the fact that people who are deprived of dreams by being woken when their EEG indicates they are dreaming quickly become depressed. Storr suggests that this inner world of dreams and fantasies develops in response to frustration, not having one's needs met instantly (it would be a superhuman mother who could both feed her baby and change its nappy at the same time, for example). This intrinsic frustration is recorded by the brain, more alertly and efficiently and sensitively the more gifted the child is. Infants are much better at seeing, hearing and feeling than doing or expressing themselves: this is another intrinsic frustration.

What does this frustration do, and in particular is it put to good use? This may link to Man's opportunistic, adaptable nature, in which his cleverness and ability to transmit learning from generation to generation are all-important. Although Man is quite long-lived as animals of his size go, we still spend a uniquely large part of that time as children compared to other mammals: a quarter of our average lives. This period, childhood, is prolonged for learning. Apparently childish attitudes tend to persist into adulthood, too: a love of games, for example. So do even babyish, primitive desires: the urge to put things in one's mouth over and above eating, a love of order, and the urge to show off. These are linked by psychoanalytical theorists to the phases of personality and emotional development I described earlier. The long learning phase means that our emotional development tends to be relatively static from the ages of 5 to 14 or so; Man's alertness, plus the fact that we can never get exactly what we want (in particular from relationships, especially one's parents) mean that the frustration of infancy stays: life is never perfect. "Necessity is one parent of invention; the other is the discontent which is a consequence of man's prolonged immaturity."

This frustration, then, this "divine discontent", makes us continue to try to make links between the inner emotional world and outer reality. Early on, inanimate objects can provide this link (Linus's security blanket) but later on, creative play (or sport, or religion, or gardening, or science or art) often do this. (Storr makes some interesting observations about fetishism as a sexual version of this role of inanimate objects, and about masturbation: basically, he's not in favour of either, as neither really promote real relationships; both make sexual impulses stay in the inner world rather than crossing the bridge to reality. He also comments that infatuated, romantic love will often interfere with creativity.) He is critical of artists who paint the world in black-and-white tones, with good and evil, idealised heroes and black villains. (Even Shakespeare was guilty: Othello idealised Desdemona, and Iago is ideally villainous. I would add Frodo and Gollum, in

fact much of the cast of *The Lord of the Rings*, to that list.)

Most reasonably well-balanced people have usually managed to resolve such opposites in their personality. Storr is of the view that creative people are not only full of such opposites, but that the creative urge is the result partly of their need to resolve such opposites, which go hand in hand with the sense of frustration described above. For example, he feels that creative people conform largely to their own inner standards, being notably independent, with relatively little tendency to join organisations and social groups. I would illustrate that by pointing out that although a number of authors are active in the BSFA, they are not primarily active in it out of respect for the organisation as a social group, but because the chances to communicate that it offers happen to meet their own needs, to develop themselves. This independence is partially opposed to, but not inconsistent with, a need for positive criticism and acclaim. In fact, some creators keep their ideas to themselves to avert negative comments, to which they may be very alert due to social sensitivity.

Some may be trying to work out their own identity, their place in the world, through creation.

Another opposite found in creative people is a very consistent preference for good design and form (this is noted in both scientists and artists) opposed to a liking for complexity, asymmetry and incompleteness.

You don't need an extremely high IQ to be creative, but you do need to be intelligent to present your ideas well.

Creative people also score highly in psychological tests designed to measure traits normally characteristic of the opposite sex; to oversimplify it a bit, they're not simple macho men or sweetly feminine women. This refers not so much to their sexuality per se, but to their general approach to life — they can produce brainchildren by themselves? — they shun the opposite gender's aspect to their natures less than most.

Other opposites Storr quotes are strong emotions versus a strong capacity to contain them; fluency and imagination versus self-criticism and judgement; scepticism versus credulity; also an ability for hard work versus an ability to catch random inspiration. Historically, ideas on creativity have fluctuated; some, like Galton, stress hard work and zeal, but others, including most creative people themselves, stress that random inspiration is the initial key and that if you push yourself consciously too hard you actively interfere with the process. Only once the initial idea has come to maturity does the hard work become important. Major ideas often occur in a state of reverie, half-way between sleep and waking.

At this point Storr examines the old saw about genius and madness being close allies. He stresses that mental illness is a different thing from the character structures I was describing a few pages back, and that mental illness that causes you to lose touch with reality almost always stops creativity. Gifted children, as well as many artists, tend to be more stable than the average, not less so. The Van Goghs, Dylan Thomas, Isaac Newtons (he suffered from a paranoid illness at one stage) and the Strindbergs (a playwright who used his creativity to fight, just about successfully, a war with his own paranoid hallucinations) of this world are relatively rare. Artists may come out of personality tests as more neurotic because of their greater honesty and self-awareness than most of the population.

The idea that genius and madness are related may have emerged because geniuses and madmen both have mental processes unknown to the average person; but the difference is probably that an artist is in control of his inner world (though has easy access to it), but a mentally ill person is controlled by his inner world.

Another false assumption made by many people is that the unconscious consists entirely of unacceptable impulses. It doesn't: some bits are quite nice.

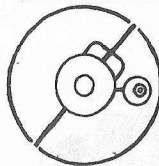
Yet another false assumption is that drugs encourage creativity. They don't — the stimulus is too temporary, and many people who have experimented with them report that inspiration gained is usually lost when you come out from the effect of the stuff. Coleridge blamed the loss of the rest of Xanadu on the arrival of the person from Porlock — but he might have been about to lose it anyway. Marijuana is more harmless than almost any other street drug, and does lead to inspiration sometimes — but you are usually so relaxed you can't use it!

The link between creation and the quest for one's identity is something I skipped over lightly above. Their sense of personal identity, for themselves, may be weaker than that they show in their works. They may be more aware of their own changes than of any thread of continuity running through their works; they may see themselves as passive vessels, waiting to be filled by new creative work, underestimating their own strength. Their sense of their own identity is reinforced by feedback from other people less often than people in everyday occupations such as bank clerks or doctors: you are only reminded you are a writer when a new book comes out (or at a convention). "Great writers are seldom great talkers; and when they are, like Oscar Wilde, one has the impression that they would have produced more work of lasting value had they talked less." Storr returns to the subject of writers' block here: in addition to the depressive mechanisms mentioned above, he feels that over-identification with one's work, a lack of distancing from it, such that life without it is mere existence, makes that work difficult to pursue. It's lost the quality of play, no longer being fun.

Creativity is addictive, though — each completed work is only a partial answer to the quest for self-knowledge. The existence of, and toleration, of the opposites mentioned above makes creative people retain the "divine discontent" that drives them to create. It is a means of coping with those opposites: creative people don't like the dissonances within themselves, but can tolerate them — and the act of creation may help resolve them to a large extent.

Jung strongly encouraged creativity in his patients, for example encouraging them to draw mandalas — perhaps Mexican has its own mandala. Other more everyday psychiatrists also encourage creativity as a means of self-expression (art therapy, psychodrama, occupational therapy, music therapy).

All arts bridge the external and internal, music perhaps being one art with the strongest link to the inner world, having less direct link with concrete reality. However, they all have their own existence once created: they belong both to the outer and the inner world, yet like a child's security blanket they are neither wholly outside nor wholly inside their creators. Storr concludes: "Man is a creature inescapably, and often unhappily, divided; and the divisions within him recurrently impel the use of his imagination to make new syntheses. The creative consequences of his imaginative strivings may never make him whole; but they constitute his deepest consolations and greatest glories."



* * * *

I have deliberately not attempted to put in too many references to parts of the science-fictional literature or to specific topics in panels at Mexican 2; I am not widely read enough in either sf itself or its critical literature to do the job properly, and there are others far better qualified to do that job than me. Many of them are on the programme this weekend. Where I felt this article to be worthwhile is in presenting some of the psychological concepts behind creative endeavour (art as play and as a means to understanding, in particular). I hope others will take the concepts presented here and use them to better our understanding of what sf is about, and also that readers less involved in sf criticism will still find the concepts useful in boosting their understanding.

— Rob Jackson



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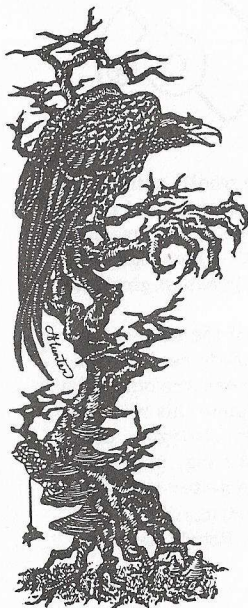
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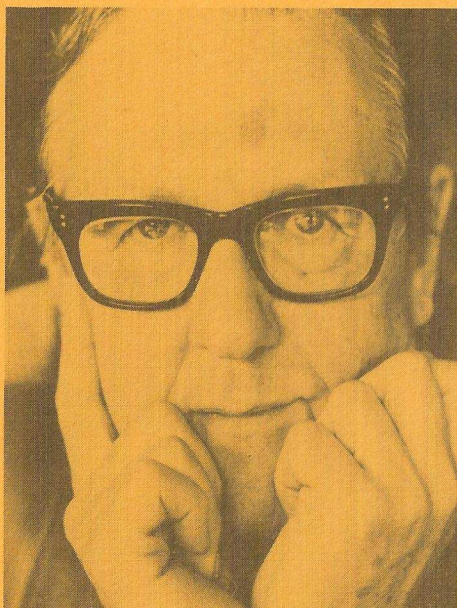
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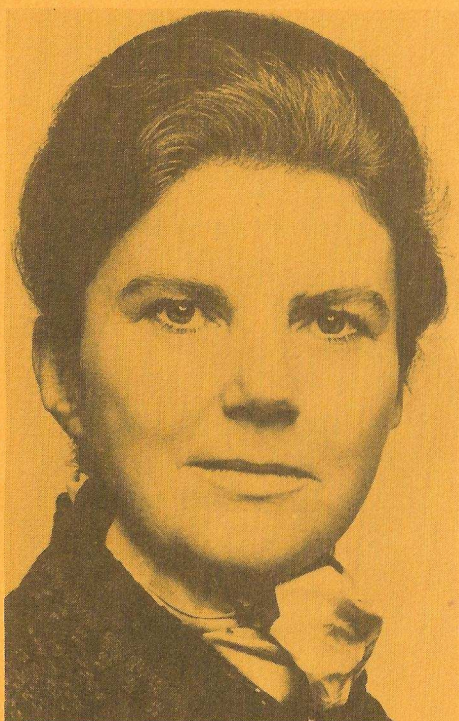
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